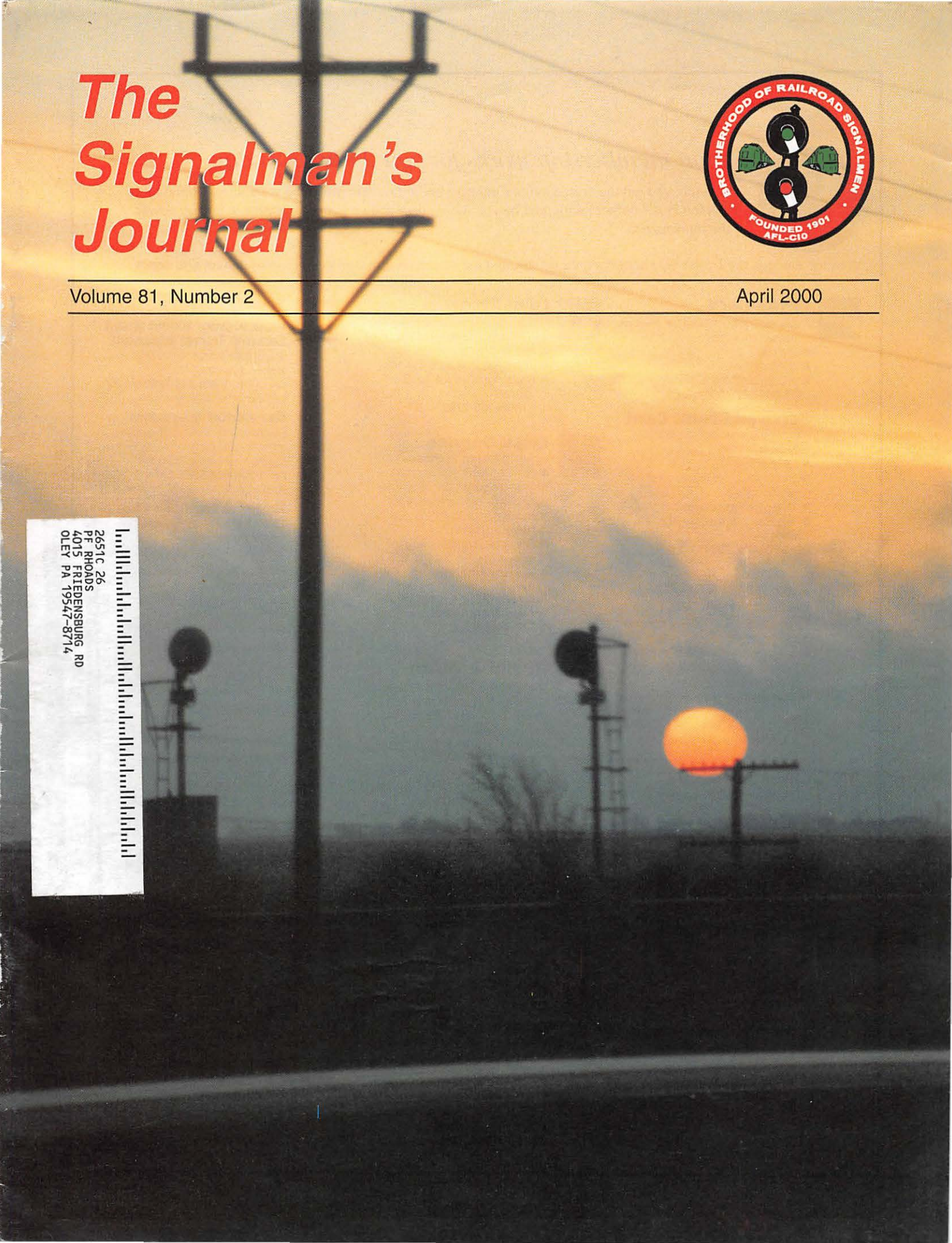
The Signalman's Journal

Volume 81, Number 2 April 2000



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COVER: Holding Signals near Slaton, Texas. Photo Submitted By: K.A. Haley, President, Local 161.

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FRA Regulations— Who Needs Them? WE DO!

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Among the regulations that we need are: 49 CFR Part 214 Railroad Workplace Safety, 49 CFR Part 233 Signal Systems Reporting Requirements, 49CFR Part 234, Grade Crossing Signal System Safety 49 CFR Part 236 Rules, Standards, and Instructions Governing the Installation, Inspection, Maintenance, and Repair of Signal and Train Control Systems, Devices, and Appliances and the Hours of Service Act just to name a few.

BRS members must comply with many federal regulations and laws. I am concerned how federal regulations are affecting BRS members. Federal regulations are important because of the level of safety that they ensure for both the traveling public and railroad employees. However, they are only effective when the employees comply with them, and the FRA enforces violations against the railroads that ignore them.

I will first talk about how they affect the individual BRS member. It is imperative that every person performs all tests in compliance with the federal regulations and adheres to the provisions contained in the Hours of Service Act. If you cannot perform a test properly, put the railroad on notice (preferably with a copy to the Local Chairman and General Chairman) that the tests could not be completed.

When I attend Local meetings, some of the first topics that I hear about concern work load problems, territory size, and failure to get necessary time to perform tests and inadequate equipment. In order for BRS members to properly perform their work the railroads must listen to and heed our concerns for the problems that face us everyday on the job. The railroads need to provide adequate track and time so that tests can be performed properly. Of even more importance is that the railroads must provide us with procedures and standards that actually comply with the federal regulations and do not just provide lip service to the regulations.

When I attend Local meetings, some of the first topics that I hear about concern work load problems, territory size, and failure to get necessary time to perform tests and inadequate equipment.

For example, one railroad believes that the simple act of opening a test switch is the proper way to check a grade crossing signal system on a monthly basis.

When a railroad initiates this type of procedure they make it absolutely clear that they are not concerned with proper compliance of a regulation but with the completion of a form that says that the tests have been completed.

Another railroad is contemplating allowing unqualified crafts (non-signalmen) to place shunts at crossings without the knowledge of the signal employees. And a third railroad is allowing unqualified crafts (non-signalmen) to place shunts at crossings that deactivate the grade crossing signal system yet does not cause the train signal system to go to its most restrictive.

These procedures are inherently unsafe. The

BRS has notified the FRA that we have grave concerns over the implementation of these procedures, yet they continue. The FRA should take a stand and not allow the railroads to implement such patently unsafe procedures.

Another railroad has installed grade crossing signal system island cards that "self adjust" on installation. In one instance, even though the signal maintainer installed the cards according to the manufacturer's instructions and the railroads procedures, when the FRA came out and tested those cards on that maintainers territory it found that the island cards did not detect a .06 ohm shunt. What do you think that railroad's response to this information was? The first response was to cite the maintainer for failure to properly maintain his territory. And then give him 30 days off. The fact that the railroad placed him in that position was immaterial to the *railroad*. Something had to be done, and what better way to say that you are serious than by having the signal maintainer pay for *the railroad's mistake*.

As I stated previously, it is imperative that every individual perform all tests in compliance with the federal regulations. If an individual cannot, he should put the railroad on notice that the tests could not be completed.

Due to the many mergers and the desire to keep costs down signal territories have been expanded and responsibilities increased to such a degree that it has become difficult for BRS members to keep the territories up to the proper standards. But unless our men and women continue to step up and write letters it is very difficult to effectuate any change.

This is a huge problem in our industry. Right now it seems that the railroads are approaching the issue as part of the cost of doing business. As long as signal maintainers are willing to shoulder all responsibility, the railroads do not have to confront this issue. The obvious solution is that all signal employees should write letters informing the railroads when testing cannot be done properly and then state the reason. Once that is done the *railroad* is now responsible for the failure to comply with the regulations. And then the FRA should aggressively impose penalties on the *railroad*.

We all have fought hard for a safe working environment. We fought hard to limit the amount of hours that a railroad can work us each day. We fought hard to get regulations to improve safety for the traveling public. In order to continue to reap the benefits of what we have fought for we need to comply with every regulation to the letter of the law and we need the FRA to insist that the railroads issue instructions and procedures that actually comply with the federal regulations and not just pay lip service to them.

After shouldering the responsibility of ensuring a safe working environment for so long BRS members need to put the railroads on notice and have them share that responsibility. If we do not, our members will continue to be blamed for the degradation in safety, which the railroads have created.

I remain, in solidarity,

W. Dan Pickett

CORRECTION

In the President's column of February issue of The Signalman's Journal it was stated in error, that the Canadian National/Illinois Central railroad attempted to move some dispatching jobs from the United States to Canada. It was the Canadian Pacific railroad that attempted to move dispatching jobs from the United States to Canada. The Signalman's Journal regrets any confusion that may have resulted from this error.

A 21st Century Union

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S COLUMN

As we enter the 21st century, the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen faces many of the same challenges as any business or organization in these times. How do we effectively serve our members in the information age while continuing our responsibility to be cost efficient stewards of the BRS?

Maybe because each BRS officer is a signalman, we have always been an organization that has embraced technology instead of fighting it. As early as the mid 1970s we have utilized computers in our Chicago headquarters to track membership and automate our in-house reporting and accounting.

Yet as technology quickly changed, we seemed to lose our ability to keep pace. The same computer program that was written in the 1970s was still being used in 1999, and our ability to interact with membership, locals and general committees was severally hampered. Beginning in August 1999, we took on the task of making our in-house technology Y2K compliant. By December 1, 1999, our systems were Y2K compliant. But we didn't stop there, we also looked at technology with the goal of making our membership and accounting systems more efficient and available to our locals and general committees. To that end we have developed a computer program that will automate local and general committee reporting and tracking of membership records. The program will be available to all local and general committee officers and will seamlessly interact with our Chicago headquarters and our four field offices.

The new membership program, currently being tested by a few of our locals and general committees, is a custom standalone program designed specifically for BRS. Uniquely, but not surprisingly, the program was developed by a signalman. Brother Kelly Haley, a Santa Fe signalman, wrote all the programming code for our new membership system, while Brother Jerry Boles, a Grand Lodge Representative, worked on hardware along with installation, and distribution of the software. The system was developed with the input of BRS officers and members, and we continue to look for and receive feedback.

Along with our membership program, we also customized Quickbooks, an off-the-shelf program, to accommodate Grand Lodge, local, and general committee accounting needs. While the membership system is owned by the BRS and will be distributed free of charge, Quickbooks is available through retailers or through a discounted licensing arrangement with Grand Lodge.

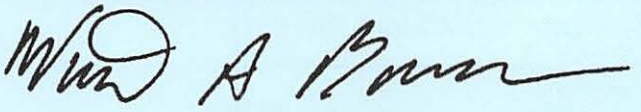
After final testing of the programs is completed, regional training for financial secretaries will be arranged. The training will include all reporting requirements and responsibilities for financial secretaries with special attention on new technology.

In the future we are looking to automate our ability to research BRS files and automate many of our everyday tasks. We also are looking into cost-effective measures to make more information available through our web site *www.brs.org.* As we face the same challenges as our predecessors faced, fighting for improved wages and benefits for BRS members, we must do so armed with the technology of tomorrow.

In the railroad industry, signalmen have always been leaders in new technology. Throughout the last century your union was always a leader in the railroad industry, and we must continue to adopt and embrace new technology if we plan to be a 21st century union.

You can be assured that your Grand Lodge stands committed to continuing its proud tradition as an industry leader well into the 21st century.

Fraternally yours,



CONGRESSMAN JAMES L. OBERSTAR

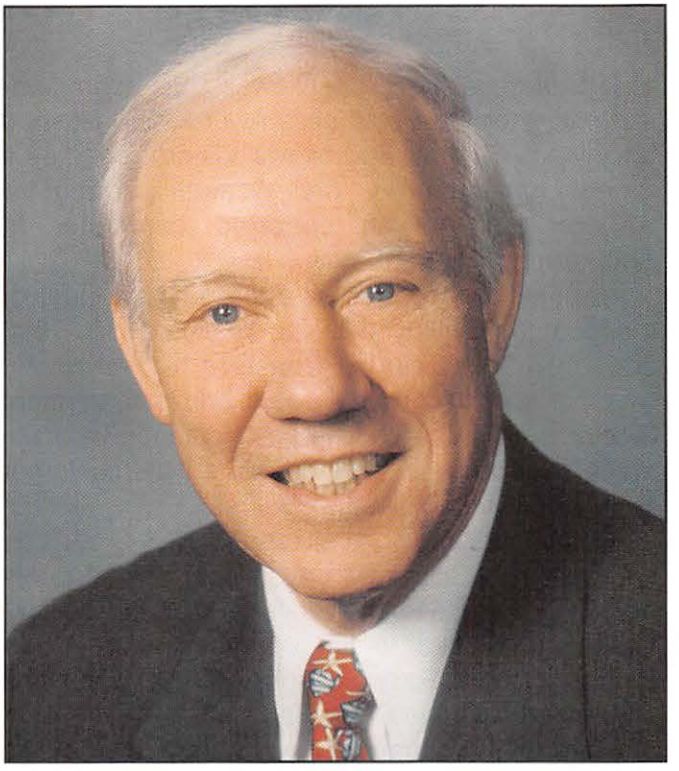
As the senior Democrat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and a dedicated friend of organized labor, Congressman Jim Oberstar serves as an Ex Officio member of the Subcommittees on Aviation, Coast Guard & Maritime Transportation, Public Buildings & Economic Development, Railroads, Surface Transportation, and Water Resources & Environment. Congressman Oberstar has worked tirelessly to improve safety and efficiency for the traveling public.

Oberstar has taken a leading role on the issue of improving railroad infrastructure. In April 1997, when the ISTEA reauthorization process had just begun, he made it clear that he thought railroads should become eligible for funding under the Highway Trust Fund. This was particularly important for passenger railroads and for short line railroads, which play a critical role in gathering cargo for line-haul movement and delivering cargo to its ultimate destination. Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) included two provisions that Oberstar supported to enhance the availability of capital to short line railroads for infrastructure investment: the revised Title V program for direct loans and loan guarantees, and the Light Density Rail Pilot Project program.

Following a series of fatal train crashes beginning in February 1996, Oberstar reviewed rail safety issues. This review led to his introduction of comprehensive rail safety legislation in June 1996 (H.R. 3578, the Railroad Safety Reform Act of 1996). The legislation was reintroduced in a somewhat altered form in the 105th Congress (H.R. 2455, the Railroad Safety Reform Act of 1997). Elements of this legislation are now being incorporated into bipartisan railroad safety legislation as part of the reauthorization of the Federal Railroad Administration's rail safety program.

Oberstar has played a key role in encouraging the development of high-speed inter-city rail systems in the United States.

Oberstar has been a leading defender of the rights of rail workers to collective bargaining rights and fair treatment in the wake of railroad mergers. Both in 1995, when the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act of 1995 was under consideration, and in 1997, when the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997 was under consideration, he played the lead role in protecting the interests of rail workers against unfair changes in their collective bargaining rights. Both of these bills were amended on the House floor at Oberstar's behest to protect the interests of rail labor.



Oberstar was also a key architect of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA- 21), the most massive and far-reaching public works initiative of our time. TEA-21 provides $218 billion over the next six years for highways, bridges, mass transit and other transportation-related projects around the country. Oberstar fought hard to preserve the protections in TEA-21 that American workers have traditionally enjoyed under the Davis-Bacon Act.

Oberstar was instrumental in establishing the Scenic Byways Program in ISTEA in 1991, and its continuation in 1998's TEA-21. He sponsored the establishment of the National Scenic Byways Center in Duluth. He preserved and expanded programs to improve air quality, protect the environment, enhance mass transit and expand facilities for bicycle and pedestrian travel as part of our national transportation system in ISTEA and TEA-21.

In TEA-21, Oberstar saw to it that Americans making the transition from welfare-to-work would have help getting to their new jobs. He supported funding for construction of bikeways and for non-construction programs or projects to enhance the safety and use of bicycles. Oberstar sponsored the enactment of the initial 1982 Buy America requirements for transportation programs and the strengthening of the requirements in 1987.

BRS Member Nominated for President's Award of Sustained Excellence

BRS member Tom Dombkowski, has been nominated for the President's Award for Sustained Excellence. Brother Dombkowski is employed as a Signal Inspector by the Coaster Commuter Service, an Amtrak operated commuter in Southern California.

Brother Dombkowski is a three-time winner of the Coaster Employee of the Year in 1995, 1996 and 1997. This award is Coaster's highest honor, which is voted on by his peers and management together and adheres to a strict criterion incorporating excellence in attendance, safety, customer focus and living the Amtrak Values.

"He is outstanding in all areas of C & S and can be counted on implicitly" says Noel Peck, formerly of NCTD. "His ideas and 28 years of railroad experience contributed to the upgrading of the San Diego Northern Railway Right of Way, when first purchased from the Santa Fe.

Tom is a true leader and well respected by his crew as shown by the nomination for this award by signal maintainer, James Mewes stating that "Tom does whatever it takes, and then some...wouldn't ask us to do anything he isn't already doing first."

Dombkowski has worked with the Coaster Finance department to control and reduce costs, and has been innovative in the use of his people, vehicles, and time. This is a challenging role for a C & S employee – because while maintaining the highest of Amtrak standards, Tom also has direct contact with the client – both fiscally and in service. He has added value to the various construction projects over the right-of-way as well. One example is Tom's efforts in assisting Amtrak and Metrolink in helping get the San Mateo Bridge back in service after the El Nino storms of 1998 in only three days.

His 28 years working on the railroad, five years with Amtrak, and great leadership qualities exemplified by his crew having 1586 days without an injury makes Tom an outstanding candidate to represent his BRS brothers and sisters for the President's Award of Sustained Excellence.

Tom and Leanne Dombkowski at the 1999 Amtrak President's Achievement Awards in Washington, DC.

2000 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRAINING

The George Meany Center for Labor Studies will be conducting the following four-day hazardous waste/chemical emergency response training programs at the Center's campus in Silver Spring, Maryland. Classes begin on Sunday evening and end early afternoon on Thursdays.

July 16 - 20, 2000
August 6 - 10, 2000
August 13 - 17, 2000
August 20 - 24, 2000

This training addresses the required procedures and different levels of response and worker protection in case of a hazardous materials release. Training also includes advanced classroom instruction and intensive hands-on drills. The highlight of the course is a simulated hazmat response in full safety gear.

Transportation, lodging, and meals are provided by a Federal grant for all program participants. In addition, participants who are unable to receive pay through the railroad to attend training will be eligible for a stipend of $107.00 per day.

Participants of this course can receive three academic credits through George Meany Center's National Labor College. Completed registration forms should be mailed to the George Meany Center as soon as possible. Space is limited to 25 for each program, and participants will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis.

APPLICATION FORM
George Meany Center for Labor Studies
FOUR-DAY HAZMAT TRAINING PROGRAM

NAME:_____.

ADDRESS:_____.

CITY:_____STATE:_____ZIP:_____.

TELEPHONE: Area Code_____ Number_____.

E-MAIL: _____.

UNION:_____LOCAL/LODGE:_____.

UNION OFFICER: Yes____ No____ TITLE:_____.

In order of preference, please indicate choice of date:

___July 16-20, 2000 George Meany Center for Labor Studies Silver Spring, MD

___August 6-10, 2000 George Meany Center for Labor Studies Silver Spring, MD

___August 13-17, 2000 George Meany Center for Labor Studies Silver Spring, MD

___August 20-24, 2000 George Meany Center for Labor Studies Silver Spring, MD

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AND/OR ALL INFORMATION TO:

By Mail:	**By Fax:**	**By E-Mail**
Hazmat Training Program George Meany Center for Labor Studies 10000 New Hampshire Avenue Silver Spring, MD 20903	(301) 431-6464	railway@erols.com

United HealthCare Announces Changes to GA-23111

Effective June 1, 2000

At recent meetings with the Railway Labor Organizations constituting the Policyholder under GA-23111, a detailed study of the premiums and benefit payments under the various Plans was made. It was agreed that the following payment rate changes would be made for coverage **effective June 1, 2000**:

Plan A – The monthly payment rate for Plan A will remain at $6 for employee coverage and $7 for dependent coverage effective June 1, 2000.

Plan B – The monthly payment rate for Plan B will remain at $16 for coverage effective June 1, 2000.

Plan C – Due to the rise in the cost of medical treatment caused by inflation plus the additional utilization of medical care services, changes in the monthly payment rates for coverage effective June 1, 2000 will be as follows:

- Plan C for employees or dependents increases from $265 to $285.
- Plan C for each student child **decreases** from $55 to $50.
- Plan C for each incapacitated child increases from $110 to $130.

Plan D – Revisions for Plan D were made effective June 1, 1999 and provide benefits equal to or greater than any standard Medigap Plan. The amounts paid under Plan D for prescription drugs continue to increase at a rate of 21% from the previous year with similar levels expected in the next few years. Due to the continuing increase in the cost of medical services (particularly the cost for prescription drugs) covered under Plan D, the monthly payment rate for coverage will increase from $165 to $190 for coverage effective June 1, 2000.

Individuals participating in Plan D cannot change their coverage until the next open enrollment period.

Plan F – A new Plan F was created effective June 1, 1999. Plan F has benefits identical to Plan D except that it does not cover prescription drugs. The medical benefits other than prescription drugs are equal to or greater than any standard Medigap Plan. The monthly payment rate for Plan F will increase from $98 to $102 for coverage effective June 1, 2000.

Individuals participating in Plan F cannot change their coverage until the next open enrollment period.

Plan E – The monthly payment rate for Plan E will remain at $103 for coverage effective June 1, 2000.

Complete details of GA-23111 eligibility and benefit provisions are contained in the GA-23111 benefits booklet which can be obtained by calling United HealthCare at 1-800-809-0453.

Questions & Answers on GA-23111 Rate Changes

Q. **Why do the premiums for Plans D and F go up every year?**

A. United HealthCare examines the amount of benefits paid out each year by each plan under GA-23111 along with the estimated impact of health care inflation (expected to be 6% for medical care and 21% for prescription drugs). The premium rate for Plan D (or Plan F) depends almost entirely on the level of benefits paid out. As these benefit dollars increase, the premium rate must increase at a similar rate.

Q. **Why is the premium for Plan D going up $25 while the premium for Plan F is increasing only $4?**

A. The difference in the rate increases under these two plans is impacted by the cost of the prescription drug benefit. Plan D and Plan F

provide the same benefits except that Plan D provides coverage for prescription drugs and Plan F does not. The amount of benefits paid is influenced by the number of times insured members receive medical care, and the cost of that care. In recent years, the increased use of prescription drugs, along with the cost of those medications, has been the major factor impacting Plan D premium. Prescription drug costs are expected to increase 21% next year.

Q. **What is the prescription drug benefit under Plan D?**

A. For drugs you purchase locally at a participating pharmacy, you must pay the first $250 each calendar year. Thereafter, you must pay 50% of the discounted cost of the drugs you purchase at the pharmacy.

You also get your drugs by mail for $20 for each prescription for a generic drug and $40 for each prescription for a brand name drug. You can get up to a 120-day supply for each prescription.

There is a maximum benefit of $5,000 on all drugs purchased in a calendar year.

Q. **Why is there a deductible on my prescription drug purchases from the pharmacy?**

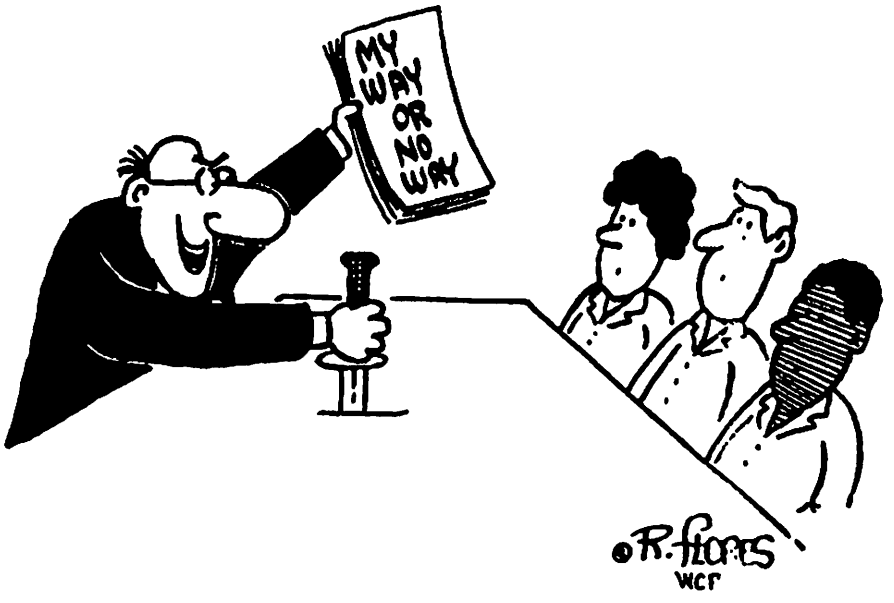
A. In spite of the advantages of using the mail order pharmacy benefit, many members continue to purchase many of their drugs at the local pharmacy which could be purchased through the mail. This activity increases the cost of the prescription drug benefit because it costs less to provide drugs through the mail than it does to provide them through a local pharmacy. A deductible and co-insurance was added to discourage this and encourage the use of the mail order pharmacy benefit.

Q. **When can I change from Plan D to Plan F?**

A. You cannot change to Plan F until an open enrollment period. The next open enrollment period will be in December 2000, with changes effective on January 1, 2001.

Q. **Will GA-23111 benefits change?**

A. At this time no benefit changes are planned. However, if costs continue to rise, changes in plan benefits may be needed to help control the cost of the plans. We will continue to strive to find the right balance between benefits and premiums for the majority of railroad retirees.



"Okay! I'm ready to negotiate!"

Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2000

After over two years of intensive negotiations between the National Carriers Conference Committee and the 13 rail unions, 11 of the 13 rail unions reached an historic agreement to make major benefit improvements in the Railroad Retirement system. These are the first changes improving Railroad Retirement in more than 25 years.

This Bill contains many important benefit changes that will affect present rail workers; retirees and widow(ers) reduced annuity problems that we have been working to change for numerous years.

BASIC CHANGES

- Lowers the retirement age from 62 to 60 with 30 years of service with health insurance coverage at 60 with lifetime maximum benefit increases tied to medical inflation rate. The health benefit is negotiated as prescribed by this agreement but is not legislated.

- Reduces vesting to five years instead of the current 10 years – this is in conformity with most other pensions. It is an improvement that has been a longstanding inequity.

- Resolves the inequity in the widow(ers) annuity by guaranteeing the amount of the annuity the retiree was receiving, or would have received, in the month before death — the same as under Social Security.

- Repeals the retirement benefit cap for long-term employees. This reduction is caused by a loss of the so-called "two-year railroad connection."

HOW THE BENEFITS ARE PAID

The Railroads will insure the future solvency of funds by absorbing any necessary future tax increases should unforeseen crises arise. Congress will never again have to step in on an emergency basis (as it has previously done), since this Bill calls for a self-actuating tax adjustment to keep the system adequately funded.

The Bill will call for the Railroad Retirement Board to create an advisory committee composed of six investment experts (3 are appointed by labor and 3 by management) to invest the pension assets. This investment board will function under the jurisdiction of the three current Railroad Retirement Board members whom will also be members. The three Railroad Retirement Board members are presently appointed by the President and confirmed by the United States Senate.

The increase in investment proceeds is to be shared 50/50 — reduced taxes for the industry and either reduced taxes and/or increased benefits for rail workers.

PROGRESS TO DATE

11 of the 13 rail unions support this bill.

We have worked with the Railroad Retirement system's actuaries to certify any changes. Without their approval, it cannot be done.

We are working to secure the leadership from both sides of the aisles of the respective committees to be sponsors of the legislation.

The original sponsors of the bill are:

T&I Committee Chairman Congressman Bud Shuster (R PA)

Ranking Member Congressman Jim Oberstar (D MN)

Ground Transportation Subcommittee Chairman Congressman Tom Petri (R WI)

Ranking member Congressman Nick Rahall (D WV)

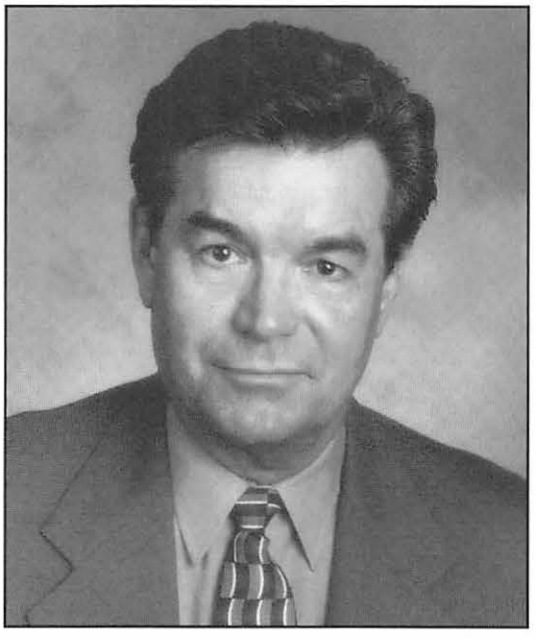
Ranking Member Congressman Charles Rangel (D NY)

Social Security Subcommittee Ranking Member Congressman Bob Matsui (D CA)

HOW OUR MEMBERS CAN HELP

Call and write your Congressman and Senator, to urge them to support this very import bill.

W. H. (Bill) Little Appointed Grand Lodge Representative



Brother Little began his railroad career on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad in August 1969, as a Signal Helper, assigned to a signal gang on California's Old Valley Division. Brother Little was enrolled into the student training program, and shortly thereafter, was promoted to Signal Maintainer working various maintainer positions until 1979, when he was promoted to Signal Inspector Stockton, California.

A member of Local 173, Brother Little was first elected Local Chairman in 1975, Vice General Chairman and State Legislative Representative in 1976. He held the Vice General Chairman's position until he took over the full time position of General Chairman/General Secretary for the Santa Fe Kansas City Southern General Committee in 1991. He held the Secretaries position through 1996 and the General Chairman's position until his appointment to Grand Lodge in 1999. Brother Little attended the past eight BRS conventions beginning in 1976. Little also served as a member on the Board of Director's Executive Committee on Santa Fe's Hospital Association (C.A.R.E.).

A former resident of Fresno, California, Brother Little graduated from Fresno High School in 1963, spent four years in the Navy, and graduated from Contra Costa College with an AA in business. Brother Little and his wife Carol have four adult children, Stevan, Wade, Chanda and Teresa.

This Month in Labor History—April 2000

by Jon Bloom

Joe Hill *(1879-1915),* was a hobo, a rebel, and a dedicated rank-and file member and songwriter of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). His best labor songs, such as "The Preacher and the Slave" ("Pie in the Sky") and "The Rebel Girl" are still sung today. He himself is immortalized in a song, "I Dreamed I Saw Joe Hill Last Night."

Born Joel Hagglund in Gavle, Sweden (where his boyhood home is now a Joe Hill Museum), he came to the United States with one of his brothers in 1902. Changing his name to Joseph Hillstrom and then simply Joe Hill, he lived and worked all over the United States, from New York to Hawaii, sending cards to his sisters back home and even an eyewitness account of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake to his hometown newspaper. He was fired from at least one job for trying to organize his fellow workers. In 1910, he joined the IWW in San Pedro, California.

By this time, the five-year-old IWW had begun to use music to get the attention of workers at street corner meetings. As Joe put it, "a pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read more than once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over." The IWW's formula was to put catchy new words to the tunes of popular songs or hymns urging workers to unionize, respect themselves, and fight for rights and dignity. They wanted a society different from the one in which "hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life."

Pie in the Sky

Joe produced a stream of IWW "hit" songs. To the tune of the Salvation Army (or as the IWW called it, "Starvation Army") hymn "Sweet Bye and Bye," he poked fun at missionaries who promised, "You will eat, bye and bye/in that glorious land above the sky/Work and pray, live on hay/You'll get pie in the sky when you die." To the tune of "There is Power in the Blood," he wrote, "There is power, there is power/in a band of workingmen/ When they stand, hand in hand."

He rewrote "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching" as a tribute to tramps who, "looking hard for work," yet hear "the same old story everywhere, tramp, tramp, tramp, keep on a-tramping."

As one IWW member later commented, "Joe understands our troubles, because he has had to sleep in barns and haystacks, and those who have never had to live such a life can never understand."

Arrested for Murder

Then, in January, 1914, Joe was arrested in Salt Lake City, Utah, and charged with murder. Twenty-two months later, despite nationwide and international protests, he was executed by a firing squad.

The state claimed that Joe and another man (who was never identified or found) were the two people who rushed into John Morrison's grocery store at closing time on January 10, 1914 and shot Morrison and his son to death. It appeared to be an act of revenge: Morrison's store was not robbed and John Morrison had once been a policeman and had often voiced fears of a revenge attack. Joe Hill had been shot in the chest that same night. Joe refused to explain how he had been wounded except to say that it was in a fight over a woman he refused to name. To the IWW and many others, the state of Utah was tagging Joe as the killer in retribution for the IWW's organizing efforts in the Utah mining regions.

The prosecutors claimed that Joe's refusal to prove his alibi was proof he didn't have one. When the IWW called for his release, and the American Federation of Labor, the Swedish government, and President Woodrow Wilson called for reconsideration of the verdict and the death sentence, Utah's governor responded with greater resolve to go ahead with the execution.

Sixty-five years later, in 1980, Utah's conservative US Senator Qrrin Hatch still agreed with the Utah governor's decision: "All the evidence, after all, is that Joe Hill actually was involved in killing John and Arling Morrison while robbing their grocery store." Others are not so sure. It is certain that the federal government, the press, prosecutors, juries, pardon boards, and governors hated and feared the IWW. Joe's status as a "footloose rebel," a wandering worker, and an IWW member, made it impossible for him to get a fair trial in Utah in 1914.

In prison, Joe fought "to have a new trial or die

trying," and wrote more songs including the one he considered his best, "The Rebel Girl" ("to the working class she's a precious pearl").

Only hours before facing the firing squad he composed his moving "Last Will":

My will is easy to decide,
For there is nothing to divide.
My kin don't need to fuss and moan —
Moss does not cling to a rolling stone.
My body — Oh! — if I could choose,
I would to ashes it reduce,
And let the merry breezes blow
My dust to where some flowers grow.
Perhaps some fading flower then
Would come to life and bloom again.
This is my Last and Final Will.
Good luck to all of you,
— Joe Hill

Joe also wrote a farewell telegram to the leader of the IWW, Bill Haywood: "Goodbye Bill: I will die a true-blue rebel. Don't waste any time mourning — organize!"

Jon Bloom is editor of the New York Labor History Association's Labor History News Service.

BRS Member Dies as Result of Possible GHB Use

It was never clear what finally killed BRS member Josh Parks, but for at least eight months before his death he had been using bodybuilding supplements known as GHB.

'You can get a great buzz from taking an ounce of this stuff, then get a great sleep and wake up without a hangover,' he told his mother. He used it to give him an energy surge after work so he'd be ready to lift weights.

GHB, or gamma-hydroxybutyrate, is a potent drug being studied as a treatment for narcolepsy. It was banned in 1991, but diet supplement companies for years had been selling GHB 'precursor' chemicals, which metabolize to GHB once they get inside the human body. As diet supplements, the precursors were not subject to regulation by the Food and Drug Administration.

By the time Parks, 23, a Signalman for Union Pacific Railroad found the precursors in late 1998, they were being sold all over the Internet and in health food stores as sure-fire helpers promising everything from better workouts to sounder sleep and more satisfying sex.

What the advertising didn't say was that GHB precursors could also induce unwanted sleep, lead to coma and kill. They were dangerously habit-forming, and had grown popular as a party high, so popular that the Drug Enforcement Administration was tracking them as 'date rape' drugs.

Myrna Parks said Josh knew nothing about this. 'If it was bad for me, I wouldn't be able to buy it at a health food store,' she said he told her. By early 1999 he was taking precursors in drinks before working out, and 'was pretty much hooked,' Myrna Parks said.

In March, Josh came for a visit to his parents' home on a yacht in Isleton, Calif., in the Sacramento River delta: 'His saliva glands had shut down, he had lost 9 to 10 pounds in four days, he had diarrhea, couldn't eat and had a terrible cough,' Myrna said. The doctor suspected thyroid problems but couldn't find any.

Then one afternoon his body started to twitch, his irises lightened, he flushed, broke into a sweat and lost the ability to speak. By the time Myrna got him to the doctor he had lost his balance, and soon he had lost consciousness. In an ambulance on the way to the hospital he started to gag on his own spit.

At the hospital, Josh recovered consciousness, lapsed, then came to again. Four hours after the initial seizure he walked out, none the wiser, his mother said. He told her she had 'overreacted.'

Two months later, Myrna and her husband returned to the boat late at night to find Josh passed out in bed. They couldn't wake him, and the symptoms were dangerously similar to the March episode. They called 911, and Josh went to the hospital again. In a few hours he was all right.

By July 4, Myrna said, Josh was having terrible problems with the coughing, and was suffering bad anxiety attacks, another frequent side effect of GHB abuse. Doctors had given him medication, which he refused to use, but he did take a cough remedy offered by his mother. A friend of the family, suffering from a back injury, had a bottle of painkillers in the house, and Josh apparently also swallowed a methadone tablet. Then he went to sleep and never awakened.

The family never suspected the cause of Josh's health problems until they got on the Internet with a pill bottle and started looking at Web sites. In January of this year, Congress finally outlawed GHB and its precursors as Schedule One narcotics, but it was too late for Josh Parks.

SIGNALMAN'S STORE

CLOTH EMBLEM of BRS logo has white letters with red and black border, steam and diesel locomotives and green-over-red searchlight signal. Ideal for hats and jackets!

COASTERS are 3-inch diameter plastic with full-color BRS logo.

BRS MASTER NATIONAL AGREEMENT BOOK contains the basic provisions of national agreements negotiated with U.S. railroads and the BRS. The loose-leaf binder with 2-inch rings makes it easy to update or add additional materials, such as local agreements.

SIGNAL TRAINING COURSE as developed by Canadian National Ry., is used in signal training programs by many U.S. railroads. This modern premier training manual contains 4 volumes and 31 sections in one 3-inch binder. (copyrighted)

HISTORY OF THE BRS, ***"THE FIRST 75"*** as written by the late A.E. Lyon, who was BRS president 1934-1945. Contains the Brotherhood's history from its formation in 1901 through 1976. BRS members will enjoy reading about their Brotherhood's history and development.

LAPEL PIN/TIE TACK has the BRS searchlight signal logo with outline and letters in gold. 5/8" in diameter. Makes an ideal hat pin!

LAPEL PIN/WITH STONE SETTING searchlight signal logo with outline and letters in gold. 5/8" in diameter.

KEY TAGS made of solid brass with BRS logo and bound leather backing.

DECALS have the BRS searchlight logo and are available in two diameter sizes - 2" & 4". The 2" decals have a **reflective** image of the BRS searchlight signal and are the perfect size for hard hats. The 4" decals have a **non-reflective** image of the BRS searchlight signal and are the perfect size for windows and bumpers. The inside window decals have a **non-reflective** image of the BRS searchlight signal and can be placed inside to resist the elements. These pressure-sensitive decals are long lasting and easy to apply.

GOLF CAPS have the BRS cloth colorlight emblem stitched into the front. Made of medium-weight cotton, they have an adjustable headband and come in 10 attractive colors (White, Black, Red, Blue, Grey, Advantage Camouflage, Realtree Camouflage, Green Camouflage, and Brown Camouflage).

STANLEY MUG is a hot/cold mug with a stainless steel finish with the BRS logo.

STANLEY THERMOS made of solid steel, unbreakable, with a green finish and BRS logo.

GOLF SHIRTS are available in three colors and made of a cotton/polyester blend, each has the BRS colorlight logo embroidered in red and green.

SPORTS STYLE JACKETS have a medium-weight polyester/cotton blend shell with nylon or polyester lining, elastic wrist and waistbands. Embroidered four-color BRS emblem. Available in white, tan and light gray only.

CANVAS/BLANKET LINED COAT made of 100% cotton canvas and has the BRS colorlight logo embroidered in red and green. Available in black only.

WOOL/LEATHER BRS JACKETS have a heavyweight wool shell, a nylon lining, with leather sleeves and collar. Embroidered four-color BRS emblem. Available in black only.

CANVAS VEST made of 100% cotton canvas and has the BRS colorlight logo embroidered in red and green. Available in brown only.

Minimum order accepted is $15.00 (U.S. Funds)

Make check or money order payable to:
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen

Mail payment and order to:
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen
Box U
Mount Prospect, IL 60056-9048

NAME_____

CERTIFICATE NUMBER_____

STREET_____

CITY_____

STATE / ZIP_____

The

Signalman's Store

ORDER FORM

Please send me the following

ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
Cloth Emblems		2.50	
Coasters		1.00	
BRS Master National Agreement		10.00	
Signal Training Course		50.00	
History of the BRS		10.00	
Lapel Pin/Tie Tack		4.50	
Lapel Pin w/Stone Setting		7.00	
Ref. Decals (2-Inch)		.30	
Non-Ref. Decals (4-Inch)		.25	
Inside Window Decals		.45	
Stanley Mug		14.00	
Stanley Thermos		50.00	
GOLF CAPS			
White		9.00	
Black		9.00	
Red		9.00	
Blue		9.00	
Gray		9.00	
Advantage Camo		9.00	
Realtree		9.00	
Green Camo		9.00	
Brown Camo		9.00	

GOLF SHIRTS	M	L	XL	2X	3X			
Multi-Pattern Brown							35.00	
Multi-Pattern Green							35.00	
White							30.00	
JACKETS								
White							50.00	
Grey							45.00	
Beige							45.00	
COATS								
Wool/Leather							165.00	
Black/Canvas							43.00	
VESTS							39.00	
Available sizes in un-shaded boxes only							TOTAL	

BRS DESIGNATED COUNSEL

When Signalmen suffer a work-related injury or illness, BRS members or their families are encouraged to determine their rights and benefits under the Federal Employers' Liability Act before agreeing to any settlement with the railroad employer. The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen has designated the attorneys listed in this directory to serve as qualified counsel for BRS members in employee injury cases covered by FELA.

Attorneys are listed by state and are designated to serve BRS members living or working in the general region of their offices. Designation of FELA counsel is by authority of the BRS Executive Council only.

BRS members are encouraged to provide information regarding FELA cases, including criticism or commendations regarding the service of designated counsel, and information on injuries and settlements. This information, which will be used in the continuing evaluation of this program, should be sent to W. D. Pickett, President, Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, Box U, Mount Prospect, IL 60056-9048.

Bold *print denotes additions or changes since the last issue of the Journal.*

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W.C. Tucker Jr.
Lucas, Alvis & Walsh
Two Chase Corporate Drive
Suite 460
Birmingham, AL 35244
(205) 733-1595
Fax (205) 733-8683

CALIFORNIA
James F. Gilwee
The Crow Law Firm
700 E Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-1209
Tel. (916) 441-2980
Fax: (916) 441-3846,
800-795-6555 (CA),
email: crowlaw@aol.com

Jay A. Kaplan
Kaplan Law Corporation
5909 W. 3rd St.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
Tel. (323) 930-2744
Fax: (323)130-1476
800-552-7526

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414 - 13th St.
Oakland, CA 94612-2603
Tel. (510) 451-6732,
Fax: (510)465-7023,
800-448-7575 (CA),
800-447-7500

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John J. Rossi
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12203 East 2nd Ave.
Denver, CO 80011-8399
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Fax:800-421-6859,
800-325-4014

ILLINOIS
Frank W. Petro
Petro & Petro
310 S. Michigan Ave.,
Suite 1310
Chicago, IL 60604
Tel. (312) 362-9596,
Fax: (312)362-7280,
800-472-5729

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Hoey, Farina & Downes
542 S. Dearborn, Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60605
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888-425-1212,
Fax (312) 939-7842

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Guy M. Albertini
3201 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218-3391
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Fax (410) 243-9599
800-248-FELA
(800-248-3352)

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Thornton, Early & Naumes
100 Summer Street,
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Fax (617) 720-2445,
800-431-4600

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LeNeave & Knavs, P.A.
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Minneapolis, MN 55402
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800-328-4340

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Hubbel, Sawyer,
Peak, O'Neal & Napier
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800-821-5257
Fax:(816) 221-5259

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1010 Market Street
St. Louis, MO 63101
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800-682-4529,
Fax (314) 241-0003

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Albuquerque, NM 87114
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Michael Flynn
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Garden City, NY 11530
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Fax (516) 877-1177

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800-547-8811
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Coffey & Kaye
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800-336-2500 (PA),
800-334-2500

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Kleeman & Abloeser
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Philadelphia, PA 19103
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800-221-5697

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700 Grant Street
Pittsburg, PA 15219
Tel. (412) 281-7229,
Fax (412) 281-4229,
800-543-9859

Robin S. Wertkin
Evans & Ivory
1311 Frick Building
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Tel. (412) 471-3740

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Weldon Granger
Jones & Granger
10000 Memorial Dr.,
Suite 888
Houston, TX 77024
Tel. (713) 668-0230,
800-392-0620 (TX),
800-231-3359

UTAH
Brent O. Hatch
Johnson & Hatch
10 West Broadway, Suite 400
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
Tel. (801)-363-6363,
800-574-6310

VIRGINIA
Willard J. Moody, Sr.
Moody, Strople & Kloeppel
Commerce Bank Building,
Suite 300
500 Crawford Street
P.O. Box 1138
Portsmouth, VA 23705
Tel. (757) 393-4093,
800-368-1033,
Fax (757) 397-7257

Eddie W. Wilson
Wilson, Hajeck & Shapiro
1294 Diamond Springs
P. O. Box 5369
Virginia Beach, VA 23455
Tel. (757)460-7776
800-752-0042

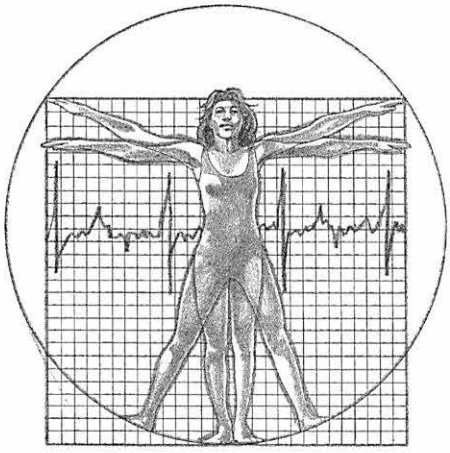
WASHINGTON, D.C.
Larry Mann
Alper, Mann & Weisbaum
1730 K Street, N.W.
Suite 1107
Washington, DC 20006
Tel. (202) 298-9191,
Fax (202) 298-9194,
800-747-6266

BENEFITS DIRECTORY

Where to file claims for all United HealthCare Insurance policies except Plan D:

United HealthCare Railroad Claims
P.O. Box 30985
Salt Lake City, UT
84130-0985

1-800-842-5252



Where to file claims for United HealthCare Plan D (Under Policy GA-23111):

All claims under GA-23111, Plan D, will be processed in United HealthCare's Salt Lake City office. The new address and telephone number is:

United HealthCare
P.O. Box 30404
Salt Lake City, UT
84130-0404
1-800-809-0453

MetLife Policy GA-23000
Life Insurance Claim Information
MetLife
P.O. Box 6122
Utica, NY 13504-6122
1-800-310-7770

United HealthCare Policy GA-23000
Patient Advocate Program:
1-800-842-4555
United HealthCare Silent Witness Program
To report suspected billing fraud:
1-800-666-FRAUD

Aetna Managed Care Membership Services
P.O. Box 7064
Dover, DE
19903-1512
1-800-842-4044

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Benefits
For treatment, claims or inquiries call:
Value Behavioral Health
(VBH)
800-934-7245
(800-934-RAIL)

Supplemental Sickness Benefits under Group Policy No. R-5000
Where to file claims:
Provident Insurance Co.
Group Railroad Claims
P.O. Box 180135
Chattanooga, TN 37401-7135
1-800-542-4231
Fax: (615) 499-3429

Dental Benefits under Group Policy No. GP-12000
Where to file claims:

Aetna Life Insurance Company
P.O. Box 120
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0120
(616) 942-6400

Managed Pharmacy Benefit
Retail pharmacy network provides medication for acute, short-term care. Mail-order prescription service provides medication for chronic, long-term care. Managed Pharmacy Benefit is available to members covered under United HealthCare Plans GA-23000, GA-23111 Plan D, and GA-46000.

Merck-Medco Rx Services
1-800-842-0070

BRS Members Ratify Five Year Pact with SAFETRAN Fabrication Welding Work Added to Contract

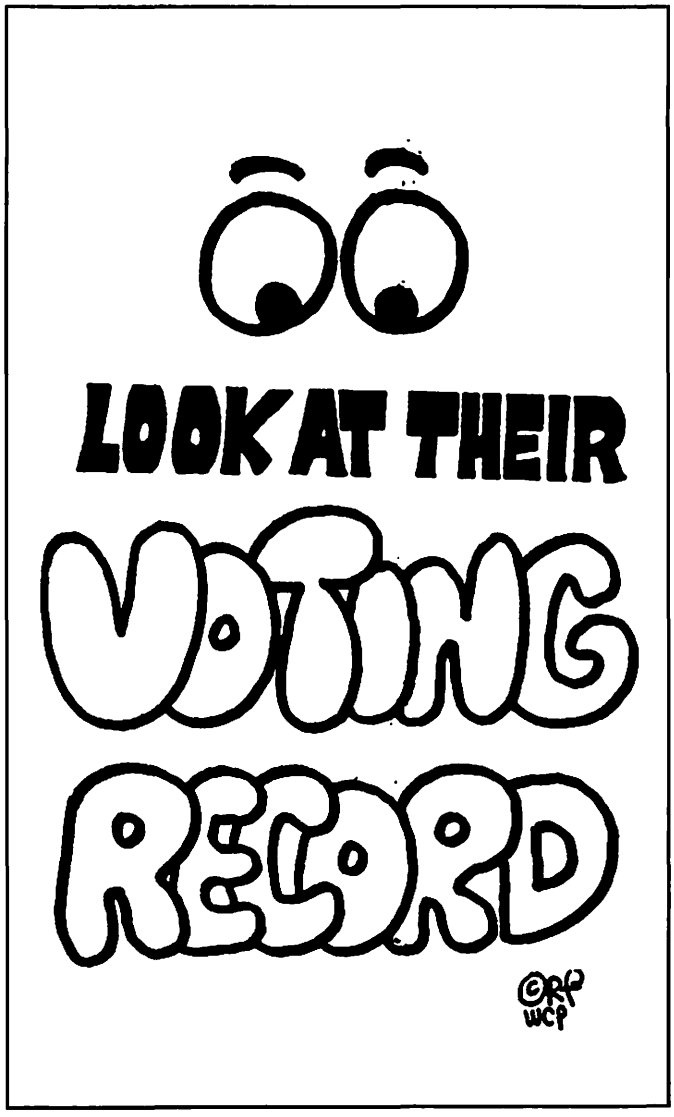
BRS Members employed at Safetran Systems Corporation's Kentucky Division plant, located in Louisville, Kentucky, have ratified a new five-year Agreement. The tentative agreement was accepted by an overwhelming majority at a special contract vote meeting held February 3, 2000 in Louisville. In the contract, BRS members agreed to perform fabrication and welding work. BRS members will perform the work in order to construct new metal cases, houses and bungalows along with other wayside signal and grade crossing components. New job classifications and rates of pay covering fabrication welder positions were added to cover the work. Safetran indicated that between 70 and 90 new employees would be hired to perform the additional work.

Late in 1999, Safetran Officials had announced plans to close its Electromechanical Division Plant, which is located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and consolidate its fabrication and welding work into its Kentucky Division plant. Likewise, BRS Local 234 Officers had agreed to open contract talks almost a year and a half in advance to explore the possibility of moving the work to Kentucky.

The new contract provides annual wage increases for the years 2000 - 3.0 percent, 2001 - 3.0 percent, 2002 – 3.5 percent, 2003 – 4.0 percent and 2005 – 4.0 percent with a $1,000.00 signing bonus. Training requirements and shift differential pay were also established. Shift schedules were agreed upon in the event that extra work shifts are added. Seniority retention provisions for layoffs were doubled to two years and life insurance benefits were upped to $15,000.00. Health and welfare provisions remained the same with no employee contributions for health care. One additional "Floating Holiday" with pay was added for a total of two such paid Floating Holidays. Safetran agreed to provide a 401 (k) retirement plan in which employees can contribute up to 15 percent of their eligible earnings and the Company will match, fifty ($.50) cents on the dollar up to the first two (2) percent. Finally, the parties agreed to extend longevity pay in the amount of five cents ($.05) per hour for each year of continuous service with a maximum of twenty (20) years of service qualifying for such additional pay.

The new contract runs through April 30, 2005, however, either party may serve a new contract notice at least sixty (60) days prior the expiration of the contract. BRS General Chairman, Robert Melson negotiated the new contract. The negotiating committee consisted of Local Lodge No. 234 members Hassell Amburgey and Kenneth Hartlage along with International Vice President – Midwest, J.L. Mattingly.

"The new Agreement will allow our members to further improve their skills as craftsmen as Safetran expands work at its Kentucky Division," said International Vice President, J. L. Mattingly, "No one should ever forget that our members stand united here. They have fought long and hard for their wage and benefits increases. They are to be commended for their continued willingness to step-up and take on these challenges."



RRB Customer Service Plan Update

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board's Customer Service Plan promotes the principles and objectives of customer-driven quality service agency-wide. The Board's plan states specifically the level of service that customers can expect, and an important part of the plan is a pledge to keep beneficiaries informed of how well the Board is meeting the plan's standards. The plan is reviewed and updated periodically as the Board gains more experience with it, compares its service with the best in business and considers feedback received from its customers.

The following questions and answers provide information about the Railroad Retirement Board's performance in key areas of railroad retirement, disability and survivor benefit payments, plus railroad unemployment and sickness benefit payments, and the handling of correspondence during Fiscal Year 1999 (October 1998 – September 1999).

1. What standards were used by the Board in Fiscal Year 1999 for processing applications for railroad retirement employee or spouse annuities?

The Board's Customer Service Plan provides that if you filed for a railroad retirement employee or spouse annuity in advance, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 35 days of the beginning date of your annuity. If you have not filed in advance, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 65 days of the date you filed your application.

Of the cases processed during Fiscal Year 1999, 93.2 percent of employee and 95.5 percent of spouse applicants who filed in advance received a payment, or a decision, within 35 days of their annuity beginning date. Average processing times for employee and spouse applications were 10.4 and 7.7 days, respectively.

Also, of the cases processed, 96.2 percent of employee and 89.5 percent of spouse applicants who had not filed in advance received a payment, or a decision, within 65 days of their filing dates. In these cases, the average processing times for employee and spouse applications were 25 and 28 days, respectively.

2. What standards were used by the Board in Fiscal Year 1999 for processing applications for disability annuities under the Railroad Retirement Act?

The Board's Customer Service Plan provides that if you filed for a railroad retirement disability annuity, you will receive a decision within 105 days of the date you filed your application. If it is determined that you are entitled to disability benefits, you will receive your first payment within 25 days of the date of the Board's decision, or the earliest possible payment date, whichever is later.

Of the cases processed during Fiscal Year 1999, 50.6 percent of those filing for a railroad retirement disability annuity received a decision within 105 days of the date they filed an application. The average processing time was 116 days. Of those entitled to disability benefits, 90 percent received their first payment within the Customer Service Plan's timeframe. Average processing time was 8.9 days.

3. How did the Board's performance in the area of survivor benefits measure up to its standards in Fiscal Year 1999?

Under the Board's Customer Service Plan, if you filed for a railroad retirement survivor annuity or a lump-sum benefit, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 65 days of the date you filed your application, or became entitled to benefits, if later. If you are already receiving a spouse annuity, you will receive your first payment, or a decision, within 35 days of the date the Board receives notice of the employee's death.

Of the cases processed during Fiscal Year 1999, 77.3 percent of the applicants for a survivor annuity received a payment of a decision within 65 days. In addition, 93.8 percent of the applicants for

a lump-sum benefit received a payment or a decision within 65 days. In cases where the survivor was already receiving a spouse annuity, 90.7 percent of the applicants received a payment or a decision within 35 days of the Board being notified of the employee's death. Average processing times for all recurring and lump-sum applications were 26 and 21 days, respectively.

4. What were the standards for the handling of application and claims for railroad unemployment and sickness benefits and how well did the Board meet these standards?

Under the Board's Customer Service Plan, if you filed an application for unemployment or sickness insurance benefits, you will receive a claim form, or a decision, within 15 days of the date you filed your application. If you filed a claim for subsequent biweekly unemployment or sickness insurance benefits, you will receive a payment, or a decision, within 15 days of the date the Board receives your claim form.

During Fiscal Year 1999, 99 percent of unemployment benefit applications and 99 percent of sickness applications processed met the Board's standard. Average processing times for unemployment and sickness insurance applications were 1.6 and 2.8 days, respectively.

In addition, 99.5 percent of subsequent claims processed for unemployment and sickness benefits met the Board's standard for Fiscal Year 1999. Payments are issued within two business days of processing. The average processing time for claims was 3.9 days.

5. How well did the Board meet its standard for replying to correspondence in Fiscal Year 1999?

The Board's standard provides that when you inquire by letter, you will receive a reply within 15 days of the date the Board receives your inquiry. If for any reason the Board cannot reply within that timeframe, it will acknowledge the letter and tell you how long it will be before your questions can be answered fully.

In Fiscal Year 1999, 99 percent of all correspondence the Board received was responded to, either with an acknowledgement or with a final reply, within the standard.

6. How did the Board's performance in meeting its standards in Fiscal Year 1999 compare to its performance in Fiscal Year 1998?

Fiscal Year 1999 performance versus the customer service standards remained at the same high level when compared to Fiscal Year 1998 performance.

The most marked improvement was shown in the processing of applications for disability annuities. For cases processed during Fiscal Year 1999, 50.6 percent received a decision within 105 days of their filing dates as compared to 28.1 percent in Fiscal Year 1998; and the average processing time in these cases improved to 116 days, as compared to 143.9 days last year. Of those entitled to benefits, 90 percent received their first payment within the Customer Service Plan's standard, with an average processing time of 8.9 days, as compared to 84.2 percent and 12.3 days, respectively, in Fiscal Year 1998.

The processing of disability applications requires medical evidence and related documentation to establish entitlement; and obtaining this material can be a lengthy process. The Board continuously seeks improvements in collecting the required documentation to provide accurate and more timely handling of applications.

Only in the handling of sickness insurance applications was there a slight decline in performance versus the standards, when compared to Fiscal Year 1998. Performance declined marginally to 99 percent during Fiscal Year 1999 compared to 99.2 percent for Fiscal Year 1998. However, this performance still exceeded the target of 98.8 percent set for the Board in its Annual Performance Plan.

7. Can beneficiaries provide feedback to the Board about the service they receive?

A Customer Assessment Survey form is available in every field office allowing beneficiaries to evaluate the service they received and suggest how the Board can improve its service. Persons not satisfied with the service they received may contact the manager of the office with which they have been dealing or the regional director who is responsible for that office. Their names and addresses are available in each office.

The addresses and phone number of all Board's field offices are also available on the Board's web site at www.rrb.gov or by calling the toll-free RRB Help Line at 1-800-808-0772. The RRB Help Line is an automated telephone service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

How Al Gore is fighting to protect your retirement.

Saving Social Security.

Gore supports setting aside 60% of the budget surplus to strengthen Social Security. His plan would keep Social Security strong well into the 21st century.
(*Des Moines Register*, 4/4/99)

Strengthening Medicare.

Gore is working to set aside a portion of the budget surplus to keep Medicare financially strong. He opposed plans to make deep cuts in Medicare and will work to continue quality health care for retired Americans.
(www.algore2000.com)

Prescription Drug Coverage.

Gore supports providing prescription drug coverage under Medicare.
(www.algore2000.com)

Protecting Pensions.

Gore has been a leader in protecting and improving pension benefits for American workers. His work has kept your money safe and he has made it easier to move your pension funds to a new job.
(WH Press Release 3/30/98; *LA Times* 4/12/96)

Your union has researched all the candidates for President. Because none scored better on the issues than Vice-President Al Gore,he has been endorsed by the AFL-CIO.

Vote. You are more powerful than you think.

For more information about these issues visit our website at www.aflcio.org.

OBITUARIES

GEORGE C. AIRD-retired member of **LOCAL 219.** Brother Aird retired in 1975 after 33 years of service with the Milwaukee Road Railroad. He was a Special Signalman at Line East at the time of retirement.

J.N. BLAKE, JR.-retired member of **LOCAL 77.** Brother Blake retired in 1979 after 45 years of service with the Norfolk & Western Railroad. He was a Signal Maintainer at Bluefield, Virginia at the time of retirement.

ERNEST D. BROWN-retired member of **LOCAL 68.** Brother Brown retired in 1996 with 39 years of service with the New York Central and Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad. He was a Signal Maintainer in Indiana at the time of retirement.

RICHARD A. CAIN-active member of **LOCAL 87.** Brother Cain had 11 years of service with the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad. He was a Signal Maintainer in Montana.

LOUIS B. FAZIO-retired member of **LOCAL 206.** Brother Fazio retired in 1983 after 33 years of service with the Missouri Pacific Railroad. He was a Communications Maintainer at Houston, Texas at the time of retirement. Brother Fazio served as a 2nd Vice President.

LYLE D. FERRIN-retired member of **LOCAL 68.** Brother Ferrin retired in 1987 after 20 years of service with the Pennsylvania, Penn Central Railroad and Conrail. He was a Signal Maintainer at Chicago, Illinois at the time of retirement.

JOHN F. HEUBEL-active member of **LOCAL 99.** Brother Heubel had 20 years of service with the Union Pacific Railroad. He was a Signalman at Ennis, Texas.

IRVIN C. HUYETT-retired member of **LOCAL 121.** Brother Huyett retired in 1990 after 37 years of service with the Santa Fe Railroad. He was a Signal Maintainer at Doughtery, Oklahoma at the time of retirement.

CLIFFORD F. MARSTON-retired member of **LOCAL 200.** Brother Marston retired in 1976 after 43 years of service with the New York Susquehanna & Western Railroad. He was a Signal Foreman at Hawthorne, New Jersey at the time of retirement.

SHERIDAN VALE-retired member of **LOCAL 97.** Brother Vale retired in 1988 after 38 years of service with the EJ &E Railroad. He was a Lead Signal Maintainer at Gary, Indiana at the time of retirement. Brother Vale served as a Local Chaplain.

CONTINUOUS MEMBERSHIP

The Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, in recognition of BRS members' contributions to the Signalman's craft and their dedication to the principle of trade unionism, has established a Continuous Service program to honor longtime BRS members. Continuous service lapel pins are presented to members every five years, beginning with their 25th year of membership.

The following is a list of the members who recently received Continuous Service pins in recognition of their years as BRS members:

40 YEARS	LOCAL
RE Hickman	52
RE Everett	72

35 YEARS	LOCAL
AB Simonson	24
CL Martin	31
WL Pratt Jr	72
TJ Clark	93

30 YEARS	LOCAL
RL Lynch	16
KC Sitton	49
DC Gruber	52
TE Stirling	98
RL Smith	103
DD Wardrip	104
RC Bentley	111
AD Boyd	136
RP Crist	136
TA Hamilton	176
JR Fontenot	206
DB Gifford	229

25 YEARS	LOCAL
RE Sanno	26
KB Ulle	26
DW Hillstrom	35
MA Cushing	48
GL Mease III	48
GE Robertson	48
JB Williams	58
SP Wright	89
RL Jarrell	94
LP Grace	137
DM Wirtz	152
JE Griffin	154
AD Moench	154
EJ Pray	154
JA Frie	160
SP Skinner Jr	178
SM Reardon	213

✓DO BUY

Union-Made, U.S.-Made Cars, Vans, Pickups

Listed here are 2000-model-year cars, light trucks and vans that are assembled in the United States by employees working under United Auto Workers (UAW) contracts. Models that are assembled only in the U.S., are listed separately from models that are assembled both in the U.S. and another country. Makes and models not listed are imported or assembled in the U.S. by nonunion workers. The list is adapted from information supplied by the UAW.

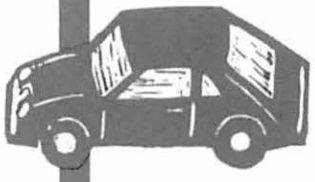
Cars
UNION-MADE IN THE U.S.

Buick
LeSabre
Park Avenue

Cadillac
DeVille
Eldorado
Seville

Chevrolet
Corvette
Malibu
Prizm

Chrysler
Cirrus
Sebring Coupe



Dodge
Avenger
Neon
Stratus
Viper

Ford
Mustang
Taurus

Lincoln
Continental
LS
Town Car

Mazda
626

Mercury
Cougar
Sable

Mitsubishi
Eclipse
Galant

Oldsmobile
Alero
Aurora
Intrigue

Plymouth
Breeze
Neon
Prowler

Pontiac
Bonneville
Grand Am
Grand Prix

Saturn
EV1
Saturn
Saturn LS

Cars
UNION-MADE IN THE U.S. & IMPORTED

Chevrolet
Cavalier

Ford
Contour
Focus

Mercury
Mystique

Pontiac
Sunfire
Toyota
Corolla

Light Trucks & Vans
UNION-MADE IN THE U.S.

AM General
Hummer

Cadillac
Escalade

Chevrolet
Astro
Blazer

Express
S-10 pickup
Venture

Chrysler
Town & Country

Dodge
Dakota
Durango

Ford
Econoline/
Club Wagon
Escape
Expedition
Explorer
Ranger

GMC
Jimmy
Safari
Savana
Sonoma pickup
Yukon

Isuzu
Hombre*

Jeep
Cherokee
Grand Cherokee
Wrangler

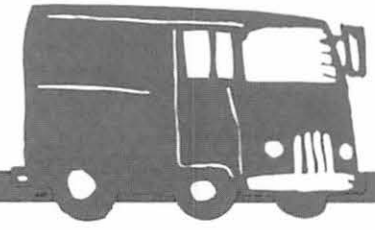
Lincoln
Navigator

Mazda
B-Series pickup+
Tribune+

Mercury
Mountaineer
Villager

Nissan
Quest+
Oldsmobile
Silhouette

Pontiac
Montana
Trans Sport



Toyota
Tacoma pickup

Light Trucks & Vans
UNION-MADE IN THE U.S. & IMPORTED

Chevrolet
Silverado/Chevy
pickup
Suburban
Tahoe

Dodge
Caravan/Grand
Caravan
Ram pickup

Ford
F-Series pickup

GMC
Sierra pickup
Yukon XL

Plymouth
Voyager/Grand
Voyager

* Made by General Motors
\+ Made by Ford

How to be Certain It's Union-made In the U.S.A.

If you're looking at one of the new cars, light trucks or vans that are both union-made in the U.S. and imported (see above), you can determine where it was assembled by checking two labels each new vehicle sold in the U.S. is required by law to display.

Simplest and quickest is the "Parts Content Information" sheet that usually is posted on a window.

It lists, among other things, the location of the "final assembly point" of each vehicle.

The second label to check, the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), is more difficult to read.

The VIN is stamped into a small metal plate attached to each vehicle's dashboard on the driver's side, often near the junction of the dashboard and the windshield.

If the first character of the 17-character VIN is a 1 or a 4, the vehicle was assembled in the U.S.

Here is the meaning of some of the other first characters of the VIN: "2," Canada; "3," Mexico; "9," Brazil; "J," Japan; "K," Korea; "S," England; "W," Germany; "Y," Sweden; "Z," Italy.

AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS

MARCH/APRIL 2000

BUILDING MATERIALS & TOOLS

BROWN & SHARPE MFG. CO.
Measuring, cutting and machine tools and pumps
▶ *Machinists*

JET EQUIPMENT & TOOLS, INC.
Auburn, Wash., distributor of "JET" brand metal- and wood-working power and hand tools for home and commercial use
▶ *Teamsters*

SOUTHWIRE CO.
Commercial and industrial wire and cable; DoItYourself brand homewire
▶ *Electrical Workers*

CLOTHING

MASTER APPAREL
Men's and boys' trousers. Labels include Hills and Archer, and Ivy Hill
▶ *Electronic Workers*

ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION
BET cable television, Action payperview, Bet on Jazz
▶ *Electrical Workers*

FOOD & BEVERAGES

CALIFORNIA TABLE GRAPES
Table grapes that do not bear the UFW label on their carton or crate
▶ *Farm Workers*

DIAMOND WALNUT CO.
Diamond brand canned and bagged walnuts and walnut pieces
▶ *Teamsters*

FARMLAND DAIRY
Milk sold under the Farmland Dairy label in stores in Connecticut, New Jersey and New York
▶ *Teamsters*

MT. OLIVE PICKLE CO.
Pickles and relishes sold under the Mt. Olive and other labels, Including the Food Lion and Harris Teeter supermarket "house" labels
▶ *Farm Labor Organizing Committee*

FURNITURE

STRAITS FURNITURE CO.
Jackson, Miss., manufacturer of entertainment centers, dining room and bedroom furniture. Brands include: Canbrough Oak Collection, Downing Street Collection, Cherry Creek Collection, Hood, Straits
▶ *Electronic Workers, Furniture Workers Division*

TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

ALITALIA AIRLINES
Air transport for passengers and freight
▶ *Machinists*

BEST WESTERN-GROSVENOR RESORT
Hotel in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.; located at Disney World, but separately owned and operated
▶ *Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees*

CROWN CENTRAL PETROLEUM
Gasoline sold at Crown, Fast Fare and Zippy Mart stations and convenience stores
▶ *Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical & Energy Workers*

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON
Hotel in Waterbury, Conn.
▶ *Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees*

HOLIDAY INN SUNSPREE HOTEL
Hotel in Kapaa, Hawaii
▶ *Longshore & Warehouse Union*

NEW OTANI HOTEL & GARDEN
Hotel in downtown Los Angeles
▶ *Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees*

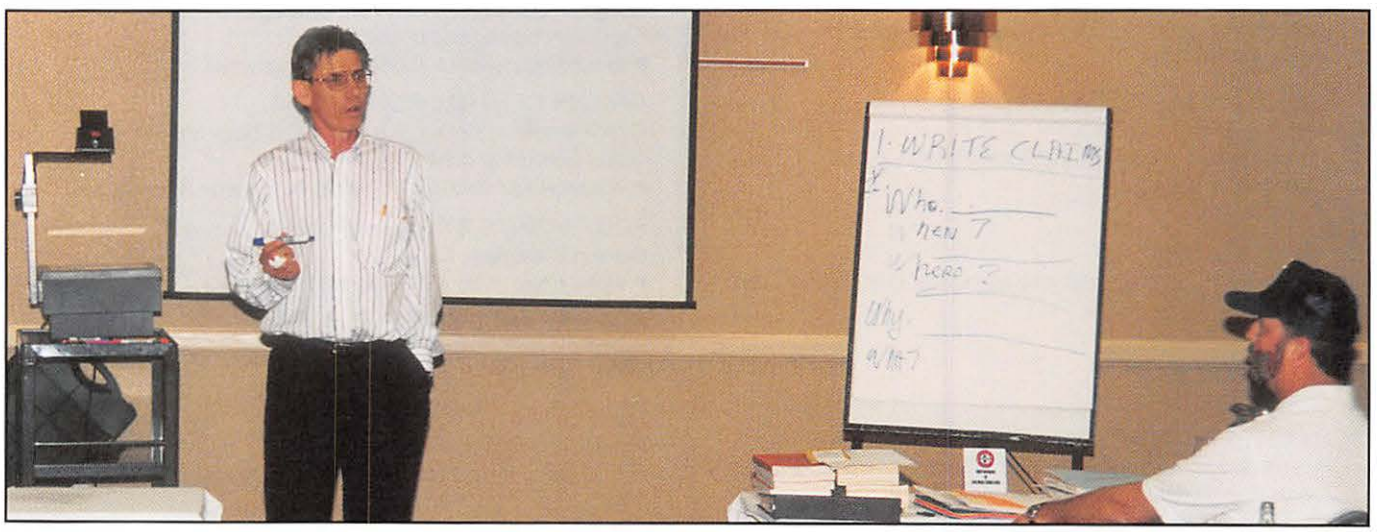
OTHERS

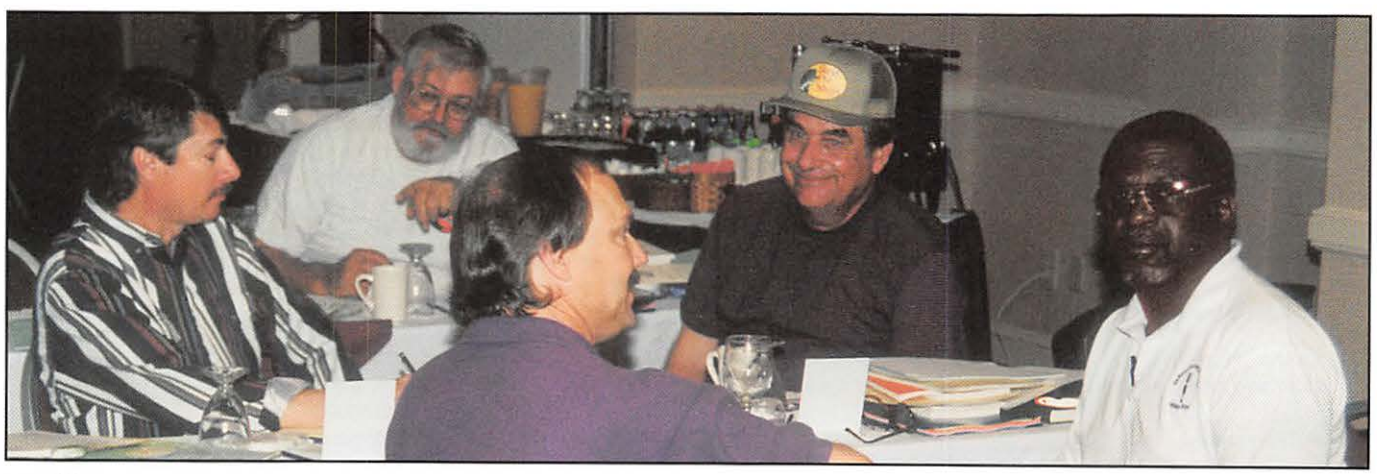
CF&I STEEL and OREGON STEEL MILLS, INC.
Steel, including rod, bar, rail, pipe and steel plate
▶ *Steelworkers*

WELLS FARGO and NORWEST BANKS
Wells Fargo has branches in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Washington; Norwest has branches in Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas, Wisconsin and Wyoming
▶ *Steelworkers*

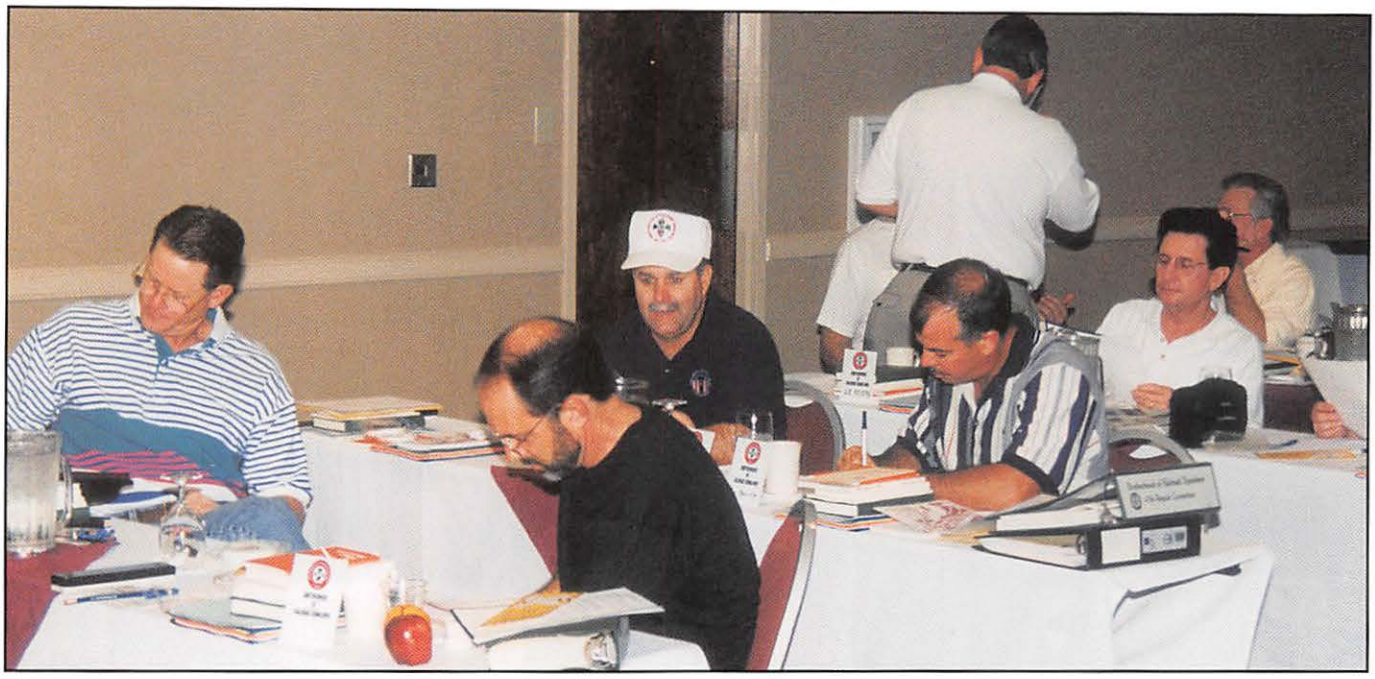
R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.
Cigarettes: Best Value, Camel, Century, Doral, Eclipse, Magna, Monarch, More, Now, Salem, Sterling, Vantage, and Winston; plus all Moonlight Tobacco products
▶ *Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers*

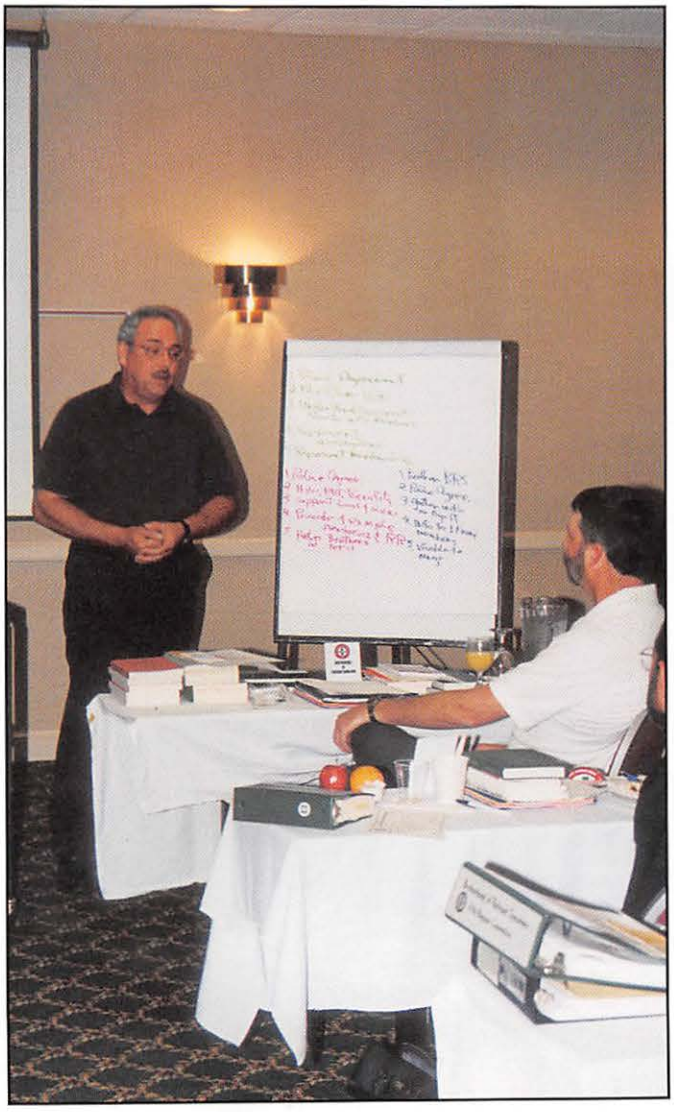
Local Chairman's Training, Athens, GA



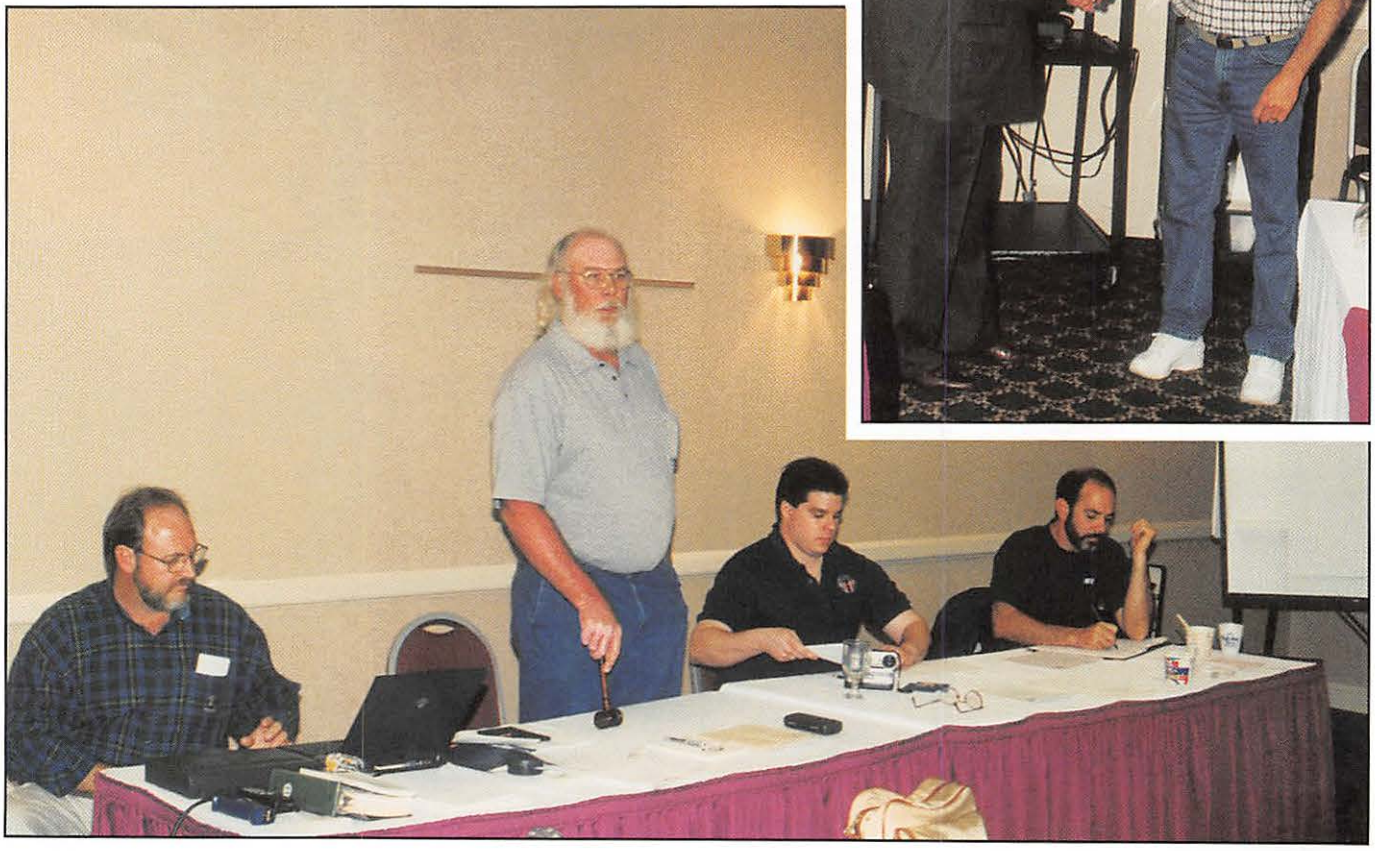


Local Chairman's Training, Athens, GA





Local 16 Meeting



Local 16 Meeting

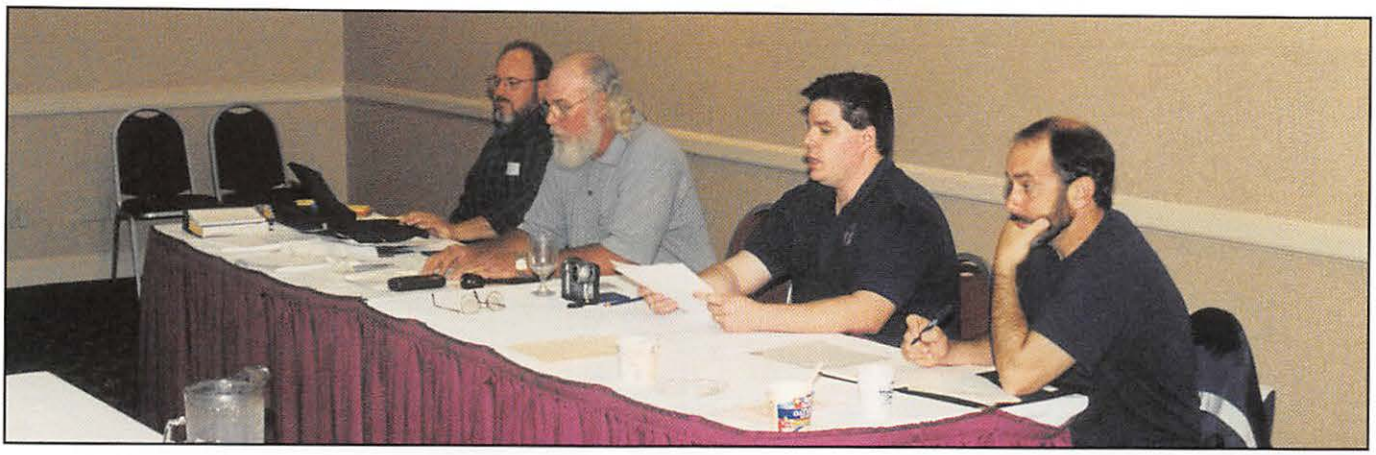
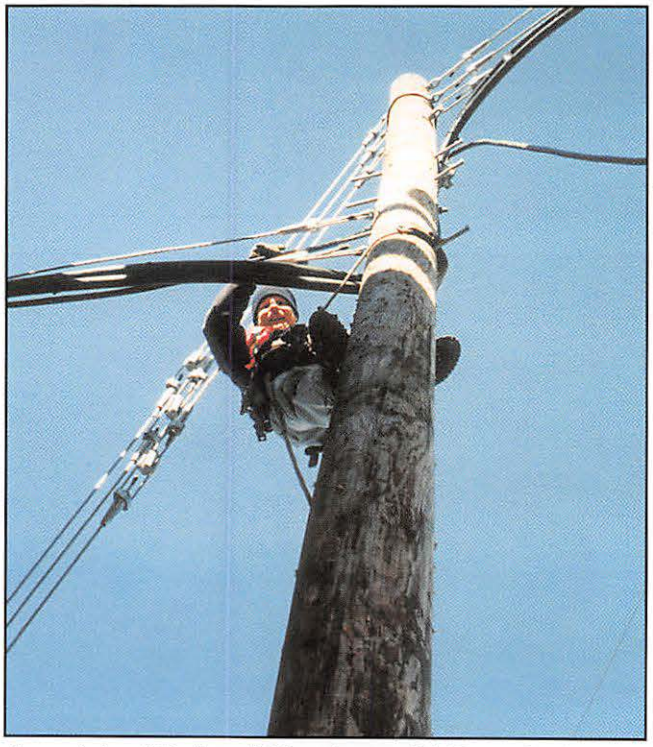


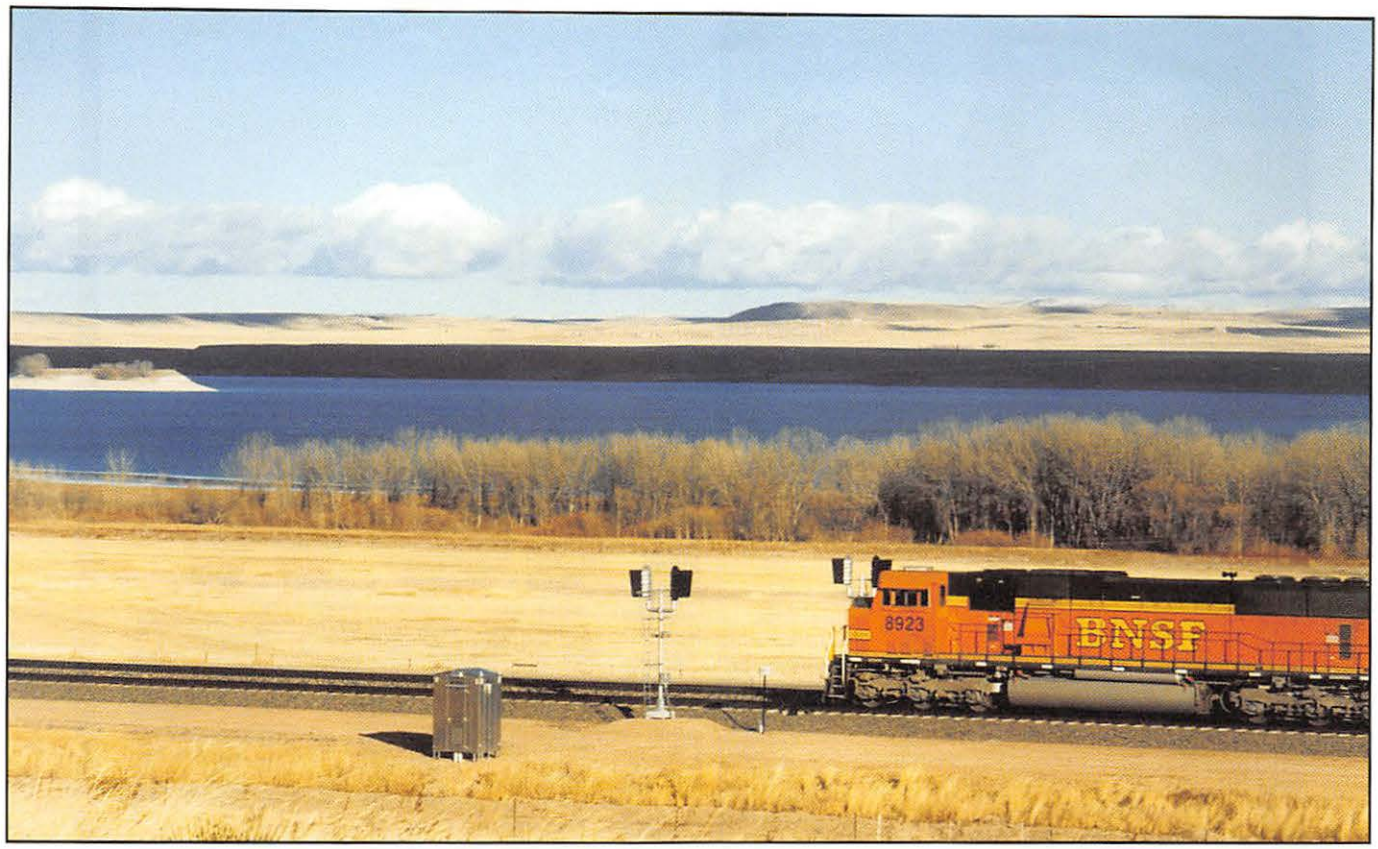
PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS FOR APRIL 2000

BNSF Signal Foreman R.L. Rudio working on pole line along Yellowstone River near Myers, MT. ***Photo submitted by: G.T. Urfer, Local 87.***

Long Island Railroad Signalman D.J. Tirabassi waiting for spinning machine to arrive. ***Photo submitted by: P.H. Zimmerman, Local 56.***



Long Island Railroad Signalman J.E. Peet, Jr. dressing cables. ***Photo submitted by: P.H. Zimmerman, Local 56.***



BNSF train near Cassa, WY, at Glendo State Park. ***Photo submitted by: G.T. Urfer, Local 87.***

U.P. Maintainers L.A. Dillard and R.R. Brown prepare to lower a transformer just unhooked by Maintainers J.L. Anderson and J.F. Warm as Inspector P.J. Wilde look on. ***Photo submitted by: M.C. McGowan, Local 104.***

SEPTA Signal Trainees J.D. Campbell and R. Freeman receive pole climbing instructions. ***Photo submitted by: J.D. Campbell, Local 53.***

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